



*"EPA was born 30 years ago at a time when rivers caught fire and cities were hidden under dense clouds of smoke. We've made remarkable progress since then. But we can't rest on our success."*

*Our mission to protect the environment, and to protect public health, is a mission without end. New challenges loom over the horizon as surely as the new day.*

*We must continue our work to ensure that with each new dawn, the sun shines through clear skies and upon clean waters -- and all our families enjoy the blessings of good health."*

*Carol M. Browner*

- Carol M. Browner, EPA Administrator

*In marking the 30th anniversaries of Earth Day and EPA, we have many reasons to celebrate. The nation's environment is the cleanest it has been in decades and our economy is soaring. Never before has it been more clear that a healthy environment is an important part of economic prosperity.*

*EPA Region 8 and the many who share our mission -- state and local governments, 27 tribal nations, businesses, communities and nongovernmental organizations -- have been working together for 30 years to enhance the quality of life enjoyed by the residents of Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming. While we have many reasons to be proud, this is also a time to reflect on the work that remains in reaching our goals for a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. As this report highlights, some very real challenges remain.*

*Our Region encompasses the heart of the West -- a place defined by abundant natural resources and raw beauty. From dramatic snowcapped mountains to vast open spaces of deserts, plains and canyons, we live and work in states where natural blessings are an integral part of our history, economy and cultures.*

*The resources that miners, ranchers and farmers have depended on since the early 1800s remain vital to the livelihood of our Region today. Environmental resources are also helping to diversify the goods and services produced here. In recent decades, vibrant commercial, recreational and tourism-based economies have emerged in each of our states, creating communities that depend on a clean environment and healthy ecosystems. Drawn by these assets, people are continuing to move here at unprecedented rates. Ironically, this growth is contributing to a new generation of environmental threats, including sprawl and development, nonpoint source pollution and global climate change.*

*As environmental issues change in nature and context, EPA has responded and continues to deliver bottom-line results. One thing is certain. We need to be flexible and innovative in meeting the nation's public health and environmental goals. "Command and control" solutions -- though useful in getting us to where we are today -- alone will not serve as well in this new century. We must also reward innovation, create incentives for individuals and firms to be more proactive, and work more effectively with our partners.*

*This report highlights our shared environmental successes while identifying key challenges we need to focus on together. The partnerships we are establishing today will be the foundation of future progress in protecting public health and the environment.*

*New alliances are being forged every day to work on creating a sustainable environment with safe drinking water, clean air and healthy places to live, play and work ... not just for our generation, but for all future generations. By working together, I am encouraged that 30 years from now we will be reflecting on another set of impressive accomplishments in protecting the environment in the mountains, plains, deserts and canyons of our states and tribal nations.*

*Wm Yellowtail*

*- William P. Yellowtail, Administrator, EPA Region 8*